

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 03795 090946Z
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /017 W
-----091042Z 092780 /12

R 090825Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3743

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 3795

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, O CHAE HUI
SUBJECT: NEW ROK MINISTER ASSIGNED TO TOKYO

1. O CHAE HUI (PREFERRED SPELLING, OH JAY HEE), FORMER MOFA ASIAN BUREAU CHIEF, HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO TOKYO AS MINISTER IN ROK EMBASSY. O LAST SERVED IN JAPAN AS FIRST SECRETARY FROM 1965-1968, FOLLOWING A FIVE YEAR TOUR IN WASHINGTON. AFTER TOKYO HE RETURNED TO SEOUL WHERE HE HEADED THE LARGELY INCONSEQUENTIAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SECTION (1968) AND THEN THE KEY UNITED NATIONS SECTION (1969) IN MOFA. HE THEN SERVED AS COUNSELOR IN ROK EMBASSIES IN LONDON (1971) AND OSLO (1972), AND RETURNED TO SEOUL TO HEAD THE INFORMATION AND CULTUREAL AFFAIRS BUREAU (1974) BEFORE TAKING OVER THE ASIA BUREAU IN 1975.

2. THE EMBASSY HAS HAD ONLY INFREQUENT CONTACT WITH O. WE HAVE FOUND HIM VERY WELL-INFORMED, BUT NOT ALWAYS PARTICULARLY INFORMATIVE. GETTING HIM TO OPEN UP TAKES A LITTLE PRYING. THE ASIA BUREAU, UNDER HIS DIRECTION, HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN MOST COOPERATIVE WITH THE EMBASSY, AND O'S DEPUTY, KONG RO MYUNG, WHO HAS TAKEN OVER FROM HIM AS BUREAU DIRECTOR, HAS BEEN SO HELPFUL AND WELL-INFORMED THAT EMBASSY HAS HAD LITTLE NEED TO GO TO O DIRECTLY..

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3. JAPANESE EMBASSY COUNSELOR MABUCHI HARUYUKI TOLD EMBOFF RECENTLY HE HAD MIXED EMOTIONS ABOUT O'S DEPARTURE. MABUCHI SAID O HAD BEEN TOUGH TO DEAL WITH AND HE WAS GLAD TO SEE HIM MOVE ON, BUT HE SUSPECTED THAT THE GAIMUSHO WOULD FIND HIM AN EQUALLY DIFFICULT CUSTOMER AND AS A CONSEQUENCE WOULD IN FUTURE TEND TO CONDUCT MORE DIFFICULT BUSINESS THROUGH THE JAPANESE EMBASSY IN SEOUL.

ALTHOUGH MABUCHI WAS OBVIOUSLY JOKING, HE HAS DEVELOPED THIS FORM OF COMMUNICATION INTO AN ART FORM WHICH WE FIND CONTAINS AS MUCH TRUTH AS MIRTH.

4. O CALLED ON DCM AND POLCOUNS MAY 4 TO SAY THAT HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH U.S. EMBASSY IN TOKYO. WE SUGGESTED HE GET IN TOUCH WITH POLCOUNS SELIGMANN, WHOM HE MET IN SEOUL IN FEBRUARY, AND WITH CHARGE SHOESMITH. O WAS AWARE THAT SHERMAN HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO TOKYO VICE SHOESMITH AND SAID HE ALSO LOOKED FORWARD TO MEETING AND WORKING WITH HIM. SNEIDER

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Sent Date: 09-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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